

MT FWP Dept Policy (06/27/2012)

Date	Initial	Action Item	Responsible Person
12/20/16	cf	All public info requests must be in writing with clear description	Requestor
12/20/16	cf	Send all request to Director's Office (DO) for review & assignment	FWP Staff
1/4/17	BD	DO consults Legal to determine if eligible for public disclosure	DO & Legal
		IF yes, DO assigns request to "Lead" FWP staff – <i>token Furthmeyer</i>	DO
		IF no, DO/Legal sends written notice to requestor	DO/Legal
		"Lead" FWP staff determines an estimate of time & cost, and sends letter/email to requestor to get confirmation to continue	Lead FWP staff
		Requestor must confirm in writing that they wish to proceed and will pay for the information at cost, not estimate.	Requestor
		Lead FWP person contacts all parties to assemble the info	Lead FWP staff
		i.e. Regional Staff –	
		i.e. Headquarters Staff –	
		i.e. Director's Office Staff	
		i.e. IT Staff	
		i.e. Other	
		Lead FWP staff receives info from other parties	Lead FWP staff
		i.e. Regional Staff	
		i.e. Headquarters Staff	
		i.e. Director's Office Staff	
		i.e. IT Staff	
		i.e. Other	
1/18/17	CF	Once all info is assembled, Lead FWP staff sends it to Legal for review/redaction	Lead FWP staff
1/23/17	CF	Legal reviews and/or redacts documents, then returns to DO	Legal
		DO or their designee creates a final bill and sends to requestor	DO/Assignee
		Requestor sends check payable to: Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Requestor
		DO/Assignee sends check to Acctg. (Raye Duke) with project # to be credited	DO/Assignee
		Acctg. (Donna Raye) informs DO/Assignee that check has cleared	Accounting
		DO/Assignee mails the requested information to the requestor	DO/Assignee

Region/Dept/Person	Type of Activity	# of Hours	X Rate	+ Cost
Kaedy Gangstad	Redaction	15 minutes	✓	0
Coker Furthmyre	Redaction	30 minutes	✓	0
			Total Cost =	0

Furthmyre, Coleen

From: Chris Saeger <csaeger@westernvaluesproject.org>
Sent: Monday, December 19, 2016 5:00 PM
To: Furthmyre, Coleen
Subject: Public Records Request
Attachments: MT FWP Records Request.pdf

Ms. Furthmyre,

I was instructed to contact you regarding this request.

Pursuant to the Montana Public Records Act § 2-6-101 et seq., I request access to and copies of all correspondence between Ryan Zinke, the Office of Representative Ryan Zinke (MT-AL) and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and all divisions within it. This should include, but is not limited to all digital, print or other correspondence, including attachments, between or involving Rep. Zinke, members of his staff and any employee within the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks or contractor working within Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks on FWP business. This should include correspondence in which Rep. Zinke or members of his staff are carbon copied ("CC'd"). Additionally, prior to serving in the US House, Ryan Zinke served as a Montana State Representative from 2008 – 2014; this request should include any correspondence from then-Montana State Representative Zinke as well.

For clarity: the time-period covered by this request is 2008 – present.

If there are costs associated with this request, please let me know and I can submit payment promptly.

If possible, I would prefer to receive this information electronically via e-mail at csaeger@westernvaluesproject.org.

If records must be sent by mail, please send them to:

Western Values Project
ATTN: Chris Saeger
704C East 13th Street, Suite 568
Whitefish, MT 59937

If you have questions or need additional information from me, please feel free to call me at 406-438-1918.

If my request is denied in whole or part, I ask that you justify all deletions by reference to specific exemptions of the act.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,
Chris Saeger

Approved _____



Not Approved _____

Ms. Coleen Furthmyre
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
cfurthmyre@mt.gov

December 19, 2016

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

Dear Records Request Officer:

Pursuant to the Montana Public Records Act § 2-6-101 et seq., I request access to and copies of all correspondence between Ryan Zinke, the Office of Representative Ryan Zinke (MT-AL) and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and all divisions within it. *This should include, but is not limited to* all digital, print or other correspondence, including attachments, between or involving Rep. Zinke, members of his staff and any employee within the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks or contractor working within Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks on FWP business. This should include correspondence in which Rep. Zinke or members of his staff are carbon copied ("CC'd"). Additionally, prior to serving in the US House, Ryan Zinke served as a Montana State Representative from 2008 – 2014; this request should include any correspondence from then-Montana State Representative Zinke as well.

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Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,
Chris Saeger

Furthmyre, Coleen

From: Furthmyre, Coleen
Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2017 11:45 AM
To: FWP *All Employees
Subject: Public Records Request

Good morning and Happy New Year,

The Department received a public records request for the following information:

"Pursuant to the Montana Public Records Act § 2-6-101 et seq., I request access to and copies of all correspondence between Ryan Zinke, the Office of Representative Ryan Zinke (MT-AL) and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and all divisions within it. *This should include, but is not limited to* all digital, print or other correspondence, including attachments, between or involving Rep. Zinke, members of his staff and any employee within the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks or contractor working within Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks on FWP business. This should include correspondence in which Rep. Zinke or members of his staff are carbon copied ("CC'd"). Additionally, prior to serving in the US House, Ryan Zinke served as a Montana State Representative from 2008 – 2014; this request should include any correspondence from then-Montana State Representative Zinke as well."

For clarity: the time-period covered by this request is 2008 – present.

If you have/had any correspondence with Ryan Zinke please send the information via email or hard copy to me by next Friday, January 13.

Any questions feel free to contact me.

Thanks~

Coleen Furthmyre
Commission Secretary
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
1420 East 6th Avenue; PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620
(406) 444-7826
cfurthmyre@mt.gov

RYAN K. ZINKE
MONTANA AT-LARGE

113 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3211

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 8, 2016

RECEIVED

SEP 13 2016

FISH, WILDLIFE PARKS
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Dan Vermillion
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Dear Dan,

Thank you for contacting me to express your support for H.R. 5650, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. I appreciate having your thoughts on this issue, as your input is valuable to me.

On July, 6, 2016, Representative Don Young (R-AK) introduced H.R. 5650, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. This bill would allocate \$1.3 billion, of existing revenue, from mineral and energy royalties to protection of America's Wildlife. This money would create State Wildlife Action Plans to conserve around 12,000 species in America. Currently H.R. 5650 has since been referred to the House Natural Resources Committee. I sit on this committee, and I will certainly keep your thoughts in mind should this legislation come before me for a vote.

As a fifth generation Montanan, I have a deep respect for animals, whether tame or wild. From ranching to our National Parks and public lands, wildlife, livestock and pets are an integral part of our way of life. I will certainly work in the 114th Congress to ensure that our wildlife conservation laws are consistently enforced.

It is an honor to represent the people of Montana. Understanding the views of my constituents is very important to me as I continue to serve you. I will never forget who my real boss is.

If I can be of further assistance to you or your family, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In God We Trust,



Ryan K. Zinke
Member of Congress

"The Only Easy Day Was Yesterday"



Steve Bullock, Governor

Dan Vermillion, Chairman
PO Box 668
Livingston, MT 59047
406-222-0624
District 2

Gary J. Wolfe
4722 Aspen Drive
Missoula, MT 59802
406-493-9189
District 1

Richard Stuker
1155 Boldt Road
Ghirnook, MT 59523
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M. Jeff Hagener, Director
MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
406-444-3186
(Fax) 406-444-4952

Look for the Montana
Fish & Wildlife Commission
webpage at
fwp.mt.gov



Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks

Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission

Resolution of the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission

August 11, 2016

'Recovering America's Wildlife Act of 2016'

WHEREAS, Montana is home to more than 700 species of wildlife and fish, and

WHEREAS, out of the 700 species of wildlife and fish in Montana only 102 are harvestable game or sport fish, and

WHEREAS, out of the 700 species of wildlife and fish, 120 species are considered species of conservation concern; and

WHEREAS, Congress passed the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson Acts that established a fund to support conservation and science-based management of harvestable game and sport fish species financed by hunters, recreational shooters, fishermen and boaters; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated and sustainable funding mechanism is lacking for many of these species of birds, mammals, fish, amphibians and reptiles that are not hunted or fished; and

WHEREAS, across the nation, the number of species petitioned for federal endangered species listing has increased by more than 1,000% over the last five years; and

WHEREAS, in Montana there are currently five species listed under federal endangered species protection, 10 more listed as federally threatened, and 3 more species are currently under consideration for listing; and

WHEREAS, Montana has a statutory responsibility to sustain and conserve all species of fish and wildlife native to Montana; and

WHEREAS, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks created a Wildlife Action Plan (2005, revised in 2015) focused on the conservation of all species including those species not listed as game or sport fish; and

WHEREAS, there is a recognized need to expand the funding base for wildlife conservation in Montana and throughout the Nation to implement Wildlife Action Plans and conserve species not listed as game or sport fish; and

WHEREAS, the recent Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources, made up of 26 business and conservation leaders, was tasked with recommending a new funding mechanism to support state fish and wildlife conservation to ensure the sustainability of all fish and wildlife for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, Congressman Don Young (R-AK) and Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (D-MI) introduced the bipartisan 'Recovering America's Wildlife Act (HR5650)' in July 2016 calling for annual dedication of \$1.3 billion in existing revenue from the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters to state fish and wildlife agencies to conserve species of conservation need as recommended by the Blue Ribbon Panel; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on August 11, 2016, the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission endorsed the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel and the 'Recovering America's Wildlife Act' recommending Congress dedicate \$1.3 billion dollars annually in existing revenue from the development of energy and mineral resources on federal lands and waters to the Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program to diversify funding and management of all wildlife; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission encourages other Wildlife Commissions throughout the West to do the same; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission respectfully requests the Montana Congressional Delegation support federal legislation (HR5650) and/or future legislation that would implement this recommendation; and

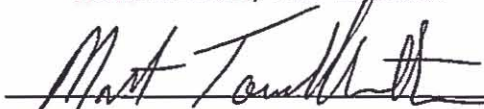
THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission supports state policy and legislation that would broaden dedicated funding mechanisms for wildlife conservation and implementation of the Montana Wildlife Action Plan, and encourages the Montana state legislature to allocate the necessary 25% non-federal match in the event that new dedicated federal funding is secured.



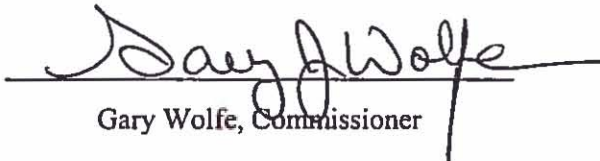
Dan Vermillion, Chairman



Richard Stucker, Vice Chairman

 by Dan Vermillion

Matt Tourtlotte, Commissioner



Gary Wolfe, Commissioner

RYAN K. ZINKE
MONTANA AT-LARGE

113 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3211

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2015

RECEIVED

DEC 07 2015

FISH, WILDLIFE PARKS
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Dan Vermillion
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Dear Dan,

Thank you for contacting me about H.R. 974. I appreciate having your thoughts on this issue, as your input is valuable to me.

As a fifth generation Montanan, I know how important our public lands are to our local economies, communities, and, more importantly, our very way of life. Our wealth of natural resources creates jobs, supports families, and promotes recreation. Multiple uses are a vital tradition in Montana, and I believe it is one we must uphold when considering legislation regarding federal lands.

H.R.974, the Yellowstone and Grand Teton Paddling Act, was introduced by Representative Cynthia Lummis (R-WY). As you know, this legislation would allow for the use of hand-propelled vessels, such as canoes and kayaks, in sections of streams and rivers that flow through Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park. H.R.974 passed out of House Committee on Natural Resources on October 8, 2015 by a vote of 23-15, but has not yet been taken up by the full House of Representatives. I chose to support of this legislation because I believe recreation and conservation efforts can and should go hand in hand. As we look to improve opportunities on our national lands, we must consider long term approaches to improve the management, accessibility, and livelihood of our parks.

It is an honor to represent the people of Montana. Understanding the views of my constituents is very important to me as I continue to serve you. I will never forget who my real boss is.

If I can be of further assistance to you or your family, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In God We Trust,



Ryan K. Zinke
Member of Congress

"The Only Easy Day Was Yesterday"



Steve Bullock, Governor

Dan Vermillion, Chairman
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Look for the Montana
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web page at
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**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

Montana

Fish & Wildlife Commission

November 12, 2015

Honorable Ryan Zinke
House of Representatives
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: U.S. Representative Cynthia Lummis's Yellowstone and Grand Teton Paddling Act

Dear Congressman Zinke:

We are writing as Montana's Fish and Wildlife Commission and are unanimously urging you to oppose H.R. 974 - Yellowstone and Grand Teton Paddling Act and any Senate companion legislation. As Commissioners, we spend a great deal of time managing recreational activities on Montana's waterways and working to insure that said recreational activities do not adversely affect the resources we are charged with managing.

To that end, we are very concerned this bill would lift existing protections and policies on hand-propelled vessels in most of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks---where existing management practices balance recreation and conservation. H.R. 974 proposes to profoundly change the management of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Park's waterways, the National Park Service would be required to develop new regulations on the use of hand-propelled vessels for up to 6,500 miles of backcountry streams and rivers within three years and required to open 56 rivers and streams (450 river miles) regardless of the results of scientific analysis. As I am sure all of you know, the Park system is under extreme financial pressure due to lack of funding and increased expenses. This new unfunded mandate would add to this pressure and reduce the Parks' ability to adequately serve its constituents.

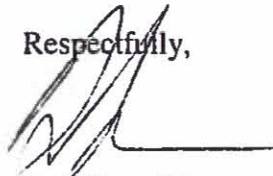
More important than the fiscal impact, opening these waterways to canoes, packrafts, kayaks, rafts, and driftboats would adversely impact the last sanctuary of Yellowstone Cutthroat in the world. If any of you have driven up the Paradise Valley or the Madison Valley on the weekends over the past several years, then you have seen just how crowded the waterways have become. Imagine this same mob of boats floating down the Lamar, Slough Creek, or the Black Canyon of the Yellowstone. Fish that are presently able to escape the crowds during the hot water times of the summer would suddenly have nowhere to hide. This will impact the health of the fish population in these rivers and will severely undercut the Wyoming, Idaho,

and Montana's work to manage these species at levels that prevent them from being listed as an Endangered Species.

We have heard all of you over time talk about those special moment of quiet and solitude in Montana's wild places. We agree. Whether it be Golden Trout in the Crazies, West Slope Cutthroat on the North Fork, or the majesty of Montana's hi-line, these places make Montana a very special place to live and serve as a vital foundation for our state's economic and environmental health. Yellowstone Park and its waterways serve the same function for Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.

Accordingly, it is our belief that Congresswoman Lummis' misguided bill would have irrevocable, negative impacts upon the health and quality of the Parks' waterways. It is a solution in search of a problem, and we ask you to oppose it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Vermillion', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Dan Vermillion
Chairman

c: Honorable Jon Tester
Honorable Steve Daines

RYAN K. ZINKE
MONTANA AT-LARGE

113 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3211

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2015

RECEIVED

DEC 07 2015

FISH, WILDLIFE PARKS
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Dan Vermillion
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Dear Dan,

Thank you for contacting me to express your support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). I appreciate having your thoughts on this issue, as your input is valuable to me.

As a fifth generation Montanan, I understand how important our public lands are to our local economies, communities, and, more importantly, our very way of life. Our wealth of natural resources creates jobs, supports families, and promotes recreation. It is of utmost importance to me that we preserve the public's access to these lands.

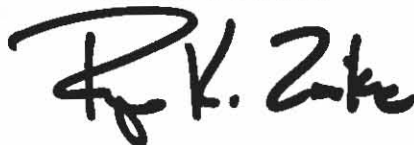
I, too, recognize the importance of LWCF funds in Montana. Using a portion of revenues from offshoring drilling, not taxpayer dollars, to pay for federal and state outdoor recreation projects is a unique way to protect our natural heritage. I believe conservation efforts, coupled with effective forest management policies, are the best way to protect our lands from devastating disasters, particularly wildfires.

As you know, the LWCF expired on September 30, 2015. While the program is not reauthorized, it will continue to receive appropriated funding at its Fiscal Year 2015 levels. I have voted on multiple occasions to reauthorize the fund and make it permanent. Please know that I will continue to fight to ensure this important program does not fall by the wayside. I am proud to cosponsor H.R.1814, which would permanently reauthorize the LWCF. This legislation, originally introduced by Representative Raul Grijalva, has since been referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources, of which I am a member.

It is an honor to represent the people of Montana. Understanding the views of my constituents is very important to me as I continue to serve you. I will never forget who my real boss is.

If I can be of further assistance to you or your family, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In God We Trust,



Ryan K. Zinke
Member of Congress



Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission

November 12, 2015

Steve Bullock, Governor

Dan Vermillion, Chairman
PO Box 668
Livingston, MT 59047
406-222-0624
District 2

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Fish & Wildlife Commission
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**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

Honorable Ryan Zinke
House of Representatives
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Federal Conservation Funding

Dear Congressman Zinke:

Based upon a unanimous vote by Montana's Fish and Wildlife Commission, we are submitting this letter to urge you to renew the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and to support permanent funding for the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program (WCRP) of Pittman-Robertson. We appreciate your support of LWCF, and we urge you to persuade Congressman Bishop and your colleagues in the majority to re-authorize the LWCF and support permanent funding of WRCR. Both these programs benefit Montana communities, ranchers, farmers, and businesses.

Wildlife management in the United States rests on a strong partnership between states and the federal government. While states have the primary responsibility for managing fish and wildlife, we depend on the federal government to provide habitat and access on federal public land, support voluntary habitat conservation on private land, and fund the conservation of at-risk wildlife and endangered species. Over the years, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and our federal partners have been able to work together to support some of the most robust fish and wildlife populations in the West, and unmatched opportunity to hunt, fish, and view wildlife.

Unfortunately, this legacy of state-federal partnership is in danger. By not renewing LWCF and failing to permanently fund WRCR, many of the core federal programs that support habitat protection, improve public access, and keep species off of the ESA list are gravely threatened. Specifically, loss of the following aspects of both LWCF and WRCR will adversely affect Montana:

- **Federal Land Acquisition:** Montana is fortunate to have 29 million acres of public land managed by the USDA Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service. These lands provide crucial habitat for big game, small game, upland gamebirds, waterfowl, and

numerous other species. They also provide the public with opportunity to hunt, fish, and view wildlife. Federal land acquisition funds support the purchase of key parcels that are needed to consolidate federal lands, improve management efficiencies, and enhance public access.

- State Recreation Grants: Recreational grants from the National Park Service are a crucial source of support for Fish, Wildlife and Parks to provide trails, soccer fields, parks and other outdoor recreation infrastructure. More than two-thirds of Montana's fishing access sites have been cost-shared with these dollars, helping ensure we have the best public fishing access in the West.
- Forest Legacy Program: The Forest Legacy Program provides federal funding to protect private forest lands from development through the use of voluntary conservation easements. Montana's private forest lands are often on the front lines of development in some of the fastest growing areas of the state. By supporting voluntary conservation measures, this program helps protect crucial habitat while keeping these forest lands in private ownership.
- Endangered Species Habitat Conservation: The Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (Section 6) Program provides grants to states for conservation planning and habitat protection for endangered species. These funds are essential to ensuring that we can restore populations and ultimately remove them from the federal Endangered Species list.
- State Wildlife Grants: The State Wildlife Grants Program is the core federal program aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. By providing funds to Fish, Wildlife and Parks for the conservation of at-risk and nongame species, State Wildlife Grants have helped keep several species off of the Endangered Species list. This program maintains state authority while advancing the federal interest in endangered species conservation.

The collaboration and long-term planning that need to happen between state and federal agencies to make these programs a success depend on a reliable stream of funding. The unpredictability and churn of the annual Congressional appropriations process can significantly impair the ability of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to work with federal partners. LWCF has proven to be good for Montana, as well as the rest of the US.

We urge you to take action to ensure that the federal government remains a strong partner to Montana in habitat and species conservation. Please impress upon your colleagues that LWCF and permanent funding of WRCP is important to Montana, Montana's citizens, and you. To that end, we ask you to:

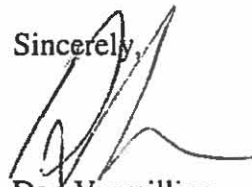
1. **Continue to Support Permanent Funding and Reauthorization for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).** The Land and Water Conservation Fund is structured to provide funding for federal land acquisition, state recreational grants, the Forest Legacy Program, and the Endangered Species Habitat Conservation Program by

dedicating a portion of federal offshore oil and gas revenue. As you know, the authorization for the LWCF expired earlier this year. Several bills have been introduced that would reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund and permanently dedicate funding for these programs.

2. **Support Permanent Funding for the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program (WCRP) of Pittman-Robertson.** Congress created the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program under the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act to provide reliable, dedicated funding for the activities currently funded on an annual basis by State Wildlife Grants. However, unlike the main Pittman-Robertson program, the Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program lacks a dedicated source of funding. Please seek passage of legislation to dedicate a funding source for this important work.

Thank you for supporting smart federal investment in the conservation of Montana's unmatched fish and wildlife resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Vermillion', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dan Vermillion
Chairman

c: Honorable Steve Daines
Honorable Jon Tester



Steve Bullock, Governor

Dan Vermillion, Chairman
PO Box 668
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Montana Fish
& Wildlife Commission

Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission

November 17, 2016

The Honorable Representative Ryan Zinke
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Endorsement for new Montana Wild and Scenic River designations

Dear Representative Zinke:

This year, Montana celebrates the 40th anniversary of our state's four Wild and Scenic designated rivers – the three forks of the Upper Flathead and a 150-mile reach of the Upper Missouri. To honor that milestone, and in recognition of the strong statewide support that exists for a new generation of Wild and Scenic River designations for some of our most iconic rivers on federal public lands, we ask that you introduce and champion new Wild and Scenic Rivers Act legislation in Congress in 2017.

In Montana, fishing, hunting, hiking and paddling are all popular activities that define our extraordinary quality of life. Recent polling conducted last month by a respected bipartisan polling team demonstrates the high percentage of Montana residents connected to outdoor recreation – hiking 74%, fishing 60%, hunting 48%. According to the pollsters, the percentage of Montanans that participate in outdoor activities is among the highest in the country. Much of our outdoor recreation is focused along our waterways. That is likely the reason why the poll also found that 67% of Montanans support additional Wild & Scenic River protections.


Quality of life aside, Montana's healthy fish and wildlife populations and wide-open landscapes attracted nearly 12 million tourists in 2015, generating \$3.6 billion in economic activity. Protected fish and wildlife habitat also contributes to a robust outdoor recreation economy that supports 64,000 jobs and yields \$5.8 billion in consumer spending annually. Ensuring our prized river corridors remain unimpaired and accessible is vitally important to Montana's bottom line.

The Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission is familiar with the Montanans for Healthy Rivers proposal to protect tributaries of five major rivers, all nominated by Montanans: the Clark Fork, Flathead, Swan, Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers. The proposal includes 53 stream segments totaling 766 stream miles on public land, less than 0.25% of Montana's 177,000 miles of streams. The proposal has garnered the support of over 1,300 official endorsements, including more than 300 businesses, four chambers of commerce, and business organizations such as Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana (representing 700 outfitters and guides)

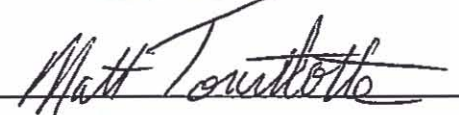
and Business for Montana Outdoors (representing 120 businesses). The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is important because it maintains the free-flowing nature of a river, maintains or enhances water quality, and maintains the remarkable values associated with a river, such as recreation, scenery, fisheries and wildlife. Importantly, the Act does not affect public access or fish and wildlife management, as those authorities rest with the state of Montana.

The Act's provisions further encourage the balance of sustainable development with the protection of our natural resources. As a result, Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission is pleased to support Montanans for Healthy Rivers Citizens' Proposal for new Wild and Scenic River designations throughout western Montana. We look forward to working with you to see a large suite of Montana's rivers protected for generations to come.


Sincerely,



Dan Vermillion, Chairman



Matt Tourtlotte, Commissioner



Gary Wolfe, Commissioner



Steve Bullock, Governor

Dan Vermillion, Chairman
PO Box 668
Livingston, MT 59047
406-222-0624
District 2

Gary J. Wolfe
4722 Aspen Drive
Missoula, MT 59802
406-493-9189
District 1

Richard Stoker
1155 Boldt Road
Chinook, MT 59523
406-857-3495
District 3

Richard Kerstein
Box 685
Scobey, MT 59263
406-783-8564
District 4

Matthew Tourlotte
940 Blonco Circle
Billings, MT 59105
406-698-9696
District 5

M. Jeff Hagener, Director
MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1420 East Sixth Avenue
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
406-444-5186
(Fax) 406-444-4952

Look for the Montana
Fish & Wildlife Commission
web page at

fwf.mt.gov



Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks

Montana Fish & Wildlife Commission

Resolution of the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission

May 12, 2016

Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project

WHEREAS, Montana's wildlife are held in trust for all citizens and rely on a mix of land ownership to prosper and flourish; and

WHEREAS, public land provides the lion's share of recreational opportunity for Montana hunters and anglers; and

WHEREAS, to preserve the future viability of Montana's native fishes, including bull trout and Westslope cutthroat, we must protect the North Fork of the Blackfoot, Monture Creek, and West Fork of the Clearwater River which are critical habitat for spawning fish and deserve to be protected and managed for continued fish propagation; and

WHEREAS, Montana's terrestrial wildlife require intact, large-scale habitat to remain strong in population in the face of increased development, climate change and loss of migration corridors; and

WHEREAS, the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project will help ensure the future viability of the Blackfoot-Clearwater Wildlife Management Area which supports wintering populations of elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer and over 200 other species of wildlife who utilize the surrounding habitat year-round; and

WHEREAS, Montanans who live, work and play in the areas encompassed by the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project have been actively involved in the development of the project over the last ten years; and

WHEREAS, the County Commissions of all three impacted Counties support the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project; and

WHEREAS, the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project will ensure the future economic viability of towns reliant upon tourism dollars in the summer, fall, winter & spring by its inclusion of the Otatsy Recreation Area and the increased management of public lands; and

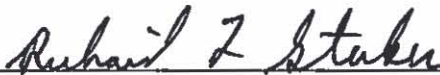
WHEREAS, public involvement in forest planning and vegetative treatment projects will be protected by legislative directive while helping to improve habitat conditions for elk, deer & bighorn sheep through sensible management of public lands; and

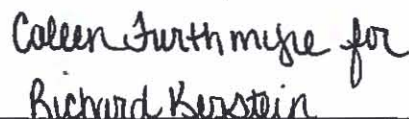
WHEREAS, the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project collaboration has already achieved their stated goal of forest restoration and fish and wildlife habitat restoration through ongoing funding by the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, however protective status for the higher elevation headwaters has yet to be realized.


THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that on May 12, 2016, the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission endorsed the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project and asked for its introduction to the United State Congress as soon as possible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission directs the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks to send a copy of this resolution to Montana's Congressional Delegation and members of the State Land Board at their earliest convenience.



Dan Vermillion, Chairman

Richard Stuker, Vice Chairman

Richard Kerstein, Commissioner

Matt Tourtlotte, Commissioner

Gary Wolfe, Commissioner



Steve Bullock, Governor

Dan Vermillion, Chairman
PO Box 663
Livingston, MT 59047
406-222-0624
District 2

Gary J. Wolfe
4722 Aspen Drive
Missoula, MT 59802
406-493-9139
District 1

Richard Stucker
1155 Boldt Road
Chinook, MT 59523
406-357-3495
District 3

Richard Kerstein
Box 685
Seeley, MT 59663
406-783-8564
District 4

Matthew Tourdoffe
940 Blanco Circle
Billings, MT 59105
406-698-9696
District 5

M. Jeff Hagener, Director
MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1420 East Smith Avenue
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
406-444-8136
(Fax) 406-444-4952

Look for the Montana
Fish & Wildlife Commission
web page at
fwp.mt.gov



Montana Fish
& Wildlife
& Parks

Montana

Fish & Wildlife Commission

February 11, 2016

Honorable Ryan Zinke
House of Representatives
113 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: US Sheep Experiment Station and Its Impacts Upon Hunting and Wildlife in MT

Dear Representative Zinke:

We are writing as Montana's Fish and Wildlife Commission to bring your attention to impending changes related to the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station (Sheep Station) based in Dubois, Idaho, which have potentially significant positive implications for hunters, wildlife, and recreationists in southwestern Montana. We respectfully ask for your active participation in congressional deliberations regarding the future management of the Sheep Station.

Background

The Sheep Station is a research facility established in 1915 and operated by the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Sheep Station headquarters and most of the 48,000 acres dedicated to this facility are in Idaho, but the Sheep Station also controls 16,000 acres of high-elevation federal lands in Montana—lands which are officially closed to hunting, outdoor recreation and other public, multiple uses. The domestic sheep which graze on these high-elevation lands are not private sheep owned by a private ranching family. They are government-owned domestic sheep owned by the state of Idaho, and are there primarily for pasturage, not research. We are asking for your assistance in requesting the State of Idaho to remove their sheep from the high elevation pastures and to return these 16,000 acres to multiple use management which allows for hunting, hiking, and other multiple uses authorized by the forest plan. We are not asking for the closure of the sheep station.

Citing agency budget constraints, staffing and aging-infrastructure issues at the Sheep Station, the Secretary of Agriculture in 2014 proposed closing the Sheep Station and moving its personnel and research to some of the 15 other ARS facilities in the country that engage in sheep research. Although ARS has stated it can maintain or improve sheep research by concentrating the work at other research facilities, members of Idaho's congressional delegation have intervened – in part because the Sheep Station's 14 federal jobs are a valued component of the Clark County, Idaho, economy. Idaho's congressional delegation has maintained funding for the Sheep Station through Fiscal Year 2016, but USDA continues to advance its proposal to close the facility.

The fate of the Sheep Station has an economic component for eastern Idaho. The issues are different for Montanans. Montana woolgrowers, this Commission, and Montanans have a stake in ensuring continued federal research designed to improve sheep husbandry. The benefits of that research presumably flow from the research quality and quantity, and the USDA does not have to close the Sheep Station to resolve the Montana

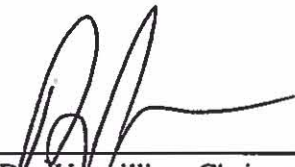
conflicts. The Centennial pastures are used merely as a source of forage for **government-owned domestic sheep**, not as a focus of research. By obtaining alternative forage, elsewhere in Idaho, the Sheep Station could fulfill its research mission and return this land to multiple-use management that includes hunter and recreation access, and management for wildlife and wildlife habitat.

In addition to issues regarding hunter and public access and use of these lands, Montanans have made significant commitments and sacrifices to restore and conserve grizzly bears and other wildlife in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and Southwestern Montana. The Sheep Station's grazing activities, with its government-owned domestic sheep, in the Centennial Mountains creates significant management challenges for the conservation commitments Montanans have made and continue to make.

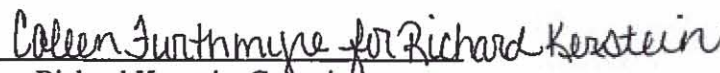
Living and working around wildlife inevitably involves tradeoffs and balancing of interests. **This Commission does not oppose grazing by private, cattle and sheep ranchers on public lands. However, the government owned, domestic sheep which currently prevent Montanans from recreating on the 16,000 acres in the Centennials are not part of a private, ranching business. They are owned by the State of Idaho and the operation of the research station does not depend on their continued grazing of these lands.**

We urge your attention and constructive participation in resolving the Sheep Station's wildlife conflicts in the Centennial Mountains of Montana and in restoring multiple use public access to the federal lands now closed to Montanans by the State of Idaho's domestic sheep.

Sincerely,



Dan Vermillion, Chairman



Richard Kerstein, Commissioner



Matt Tourtlotte, Commissioner



Gary Wolfe, Commissioner

Furthmyre, Coleen

From: O'Neill, Deb
Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2017 11:54 AM
To: Furthmyre, Coleen
Cc: Sperry, Charlie
Subject: public records request - zinke

Deb O'Neill
Planning and Policy Specialist
Responsive Management Unit
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
PO Box 200701
Helena, Montana 59620-0701
Office: (406) 444-3755
Cell: (307) 231-3881

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, through its employees and citizen commission and board, provides for the stewardship of the fish, wildlife, parks, and recreational resources of Montana, while contributing to the quality of life for present and future generations.

From: O'Neill, Deb
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2015 8:59 AM
To: 'amanda.kaster@mail.house.gov' <amanda.kaster@mail.house.gov>
Cc: 'Dave Chadwick' <dchadwick@mtwf.org>
Subject: thank you for meeting

Hi Amanda-

A big thank you to you and Congressman Zinke for meeting with Dave Chadwick and me on February 25 to discuss State Wildlife Grants. I mentioned that Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks along with partners, including 33 private landowners, used State Wildlife Grants to recover Arctic grayling and prevent the need to list the species under the Endangered Species Act.

I hope you can take the time to look at this short video (~4 minutes long) and share it with Congressman Zinke. You directly hear from Big Hole Rancher Don Reese about the success of this partnership.
http://fwp.mt.gov/education/videoLibrary/outdoorReports/video_0427.html

It was good to meet you,
Deb

Deb O'Neill
Planning and Policy Specialist
Responsive Management Unit
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
PO Box 200701
1420 East Sixth Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620-0701

Furthmyre, Coleen

From: Doyle, Pat
Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2017 3:44 PM
To: Furthmyre, Coleen
Subject: FW: Montana State Parks Recreational Trails Program Grants

Here's my one Zinke email. She did not write back.

Thanks!

Pat Doyle
Marketing and Communications Manager
Montana State Parks
P.O. Box 200701
1420 East 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0701
Office: (406) 444-3818



www.stateparks.mt.gov



From: Doyle, Pat
Sent: Thursday, November 17, 2016 3:08 PM
To: christy.hagler@mail.house.gov
Subject: Montana State Parks Recreational Trails Program Grants

Hi Christy,

My name is Pat Doyle and I'm the Marketing and Communications Manager with Montana State Parks. We met briefly after the Montana State Parks and Recreation Board meeting at First People's Buffalo Jump State Park where we discussed opportunities to promote the federal recreation grants that Montana State Parks administers.

Montana State Parks administers several different federal recreation grants, the largest two being Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Both of these grants are used on federal, state and municipal land across Montana and play an integral role in transforming recreational opportunities around the state. On average, between these two grant programs, we award \$2 million per year.

One initiative that we have started to implement in 2016 is to publicize these grants in a more strategic manner, giving them additional value to their contribution to statewide recreation, economic development, public health, etc...The passing of the Federal Highway Bill secured funding for the Recreational Trails Program for the next few years, which is something that hadn't been done in a while. Along these lines, we want to promote how this bill not only has an impact across Montana in terms of traditional Highway Bill Funding (roads, bridges, etc..), but has a large recreation

development component as well. There has been a lot of press lately about continuing LWCF and recreation funding in general and we feel that the RTP program is just as important albeit funded from a different source.

We have our new batch of RTP grant awards for 2017 and would be very interested in partnering with Representative Zinke at a few "big check" ceremonies. These ceremonies are held at a groundbreaking of a grant funded project and are attended by media, local and state elected officials, project constituents, community members, and speak to the importance and impact of their grant funded project. We feel an event like this would be a great event for Representative Zinke to attend and make the connection between the Federal Highway Bill and Recreational Trails Program grant funding in Montana. I have to be in Great Falls tomorrow, November 18th, to attend a last minute meeting. If you had time to chat, after 1:00, I would love to sit down and go over our newly funded projects and find one or two that Rep. Zinke would be interested in attending a "Big check" ceremony for. If you're booked tomorrow, I'm around on Monday and Tuesday of next week for a quick phone call.

Have a great afternoon!

Thanks,

Pat Doyle
Marketing and Communications Manager
Montana State Parks
P.O. Box 200701
1420 East 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0701
Office: (406) 444-3818



www.stateparks.mt.gov



Furthmyre, Coleen

From: Whitney, Neal
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 8:29 AM
To: Furthmyre, Coleen
Subject: RE: Public Records Request
Attachments: Talwani legal letter Ryan Zinke.doc; Miller legal letter Ryan Zinke.doc

I had 2 people in 2014 request hunting and fishing information on Ryan Zinke and those files are attached. Thanks.

Neal Whitney
License Bureau Business Analyst
Finance Division
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
nwhitney@mt.gov
(406) 444-4715

From: Furthmyre, Coleen
Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2017 11:45 AM
To: FWP *All Employees <FWPAllEmpl@mt.gov>
Subject: Public Records Request

Good morning and Happy New Year,

The Department received a public records request for the following information:

"Pursuant to the Montana Public Records Act § 2-6-101 et seq., I request access to and copies of all correspondence between Ryan Zinke, the Office of Representative Ryan Zinke (MT-AL) and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and all divisions within it. *This should include, but is not limited to* all digital, print or other correspondence, including attachments, between or involving Rep. Zinke, members of his staff and any employee within the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks or contractor working within Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks on FWP business. This should include correspondence in which Rep. Zinke or members of his staff are carbon copied ("CC'd"). Additionally, prior to serving in the US House, Ryan Zinke served as a Montana State Representative from 2008 – 2014; this request should include any correspondence from then-Montana State Representative Zinke as well."

For clarity: the time-period covered by this request is 2008 – present.

If you have/had any correspondence with Ryan Zinke please send the information via email or hard copy to me by next Friday, January 13.

Any questions feel free to contact me.

Thanks~

Coleen Furthmyre
Commission Secretary
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
1420 East 6th Avenue; PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620
(406) 444-7826
cfurthmyre@mt.gov



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

January 6, 2017

Sanjay Talwani
sanjay@kx1h.com

Dear Mr. Talwani:

You requested information on hunting and fishing licenses obtained by Ryan Zinke, DOB 11/01/1961 for the past 10 years. We searched our Automated Licensing System from 2004 to present and the results are below. We are providing this data to you as well as sending a copy to the subject of the inquiry.

2004: Resident Conservation and Fishing.
2005: No records found.
2006: No records found.
2007: No records found.
2008: Resident Conservation and Fishing.
2009: Resident Conservation and Fishing, Deer A, Upland Game Bird and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2010: Resident Conservation, Deer A, Upland Game Bird, Migratory Bird and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2011: Resident Conservation and Fishing, Deer A, Upland Game Bird, Wolf and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2012: Resident Conservation, Deer A, Upland Game Bird, Migratory Bird and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2013: Resident Conservation, Upland Game Bird, Wolf and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2014: Resident Conservation and Fishing.

This information is complete to the best of our knowledge, but is subject to limitations based on the personal information provided by the requestor, and information entered into the system by FWP and other license providers. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Neal Whitney
License Bureau Business Analyst
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
nwhitney@mt.gov
(406) 444-4715

Cc: Director's Office
Ryan Zinke



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

January 6, 2017

Ken Miller
Kendmiller57@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Miller:

You requested information on hunting and fishing licenses obtained by Ryan Zinke, DOB 11/01/1961. We searched our Automated Licensing System from 2002 to present and the results are below. We are providing this data to you as well as sending a copy to the subject of the inquiry.

2002: No records found.
2003: Resident Conservation, Deer A, Upland Game Bird, State Lands Recreational Use and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2004: Resident Conservation and Fishing.
2005: No records found.
2006: No records found.
2007: No records found.
2008: Resident Conservation and Fishing.
2009: Resident Conservation and Fishing, Deer A, Upland Game Bird and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2010: Resident Conservation, Upland Game Bird, Migratory Bird and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2011: Resident Conservation and Fishing, Deer A, Upland Game Bird, Wolf and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2012: Resident Conservation, Deer A, Upland Game Bird, Migratory Bird and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2013: Resident Conservation, Upland Game Bird, Wolf and Hunting Access Enhancement.
2014: No Records Yet.

This information is complete to the best of our knowledge, but is subject to limitations based on the personal information provided by the requestor, and information entered into the system by FWP and other license providers. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Neal Whitney
License Bureau Business Analyst
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701
nwhitney@mt.gov
(406) 444-4715

Cc: Director's Office
Ryan Zinke

Furthmyre, Coleen

From: Sullivan, Mark
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 8:40 AM
To: Furthmyre, Coleen
Subject: FW: Zinke email

This is all we have from R6. Mark

From: Sullivan, Mark
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2016 3:31 PM
To: Smith, Kathy <katsmith@mt.gov>; Kloker, Marc <mkloker@mt.gov>
Cc: Dalbey, Steve <sdalbey@mt.gov>
Subject: FW: Hello

Marc & Kathy,

Please add Christy Hagler's name to the list of folks we invite to the CAC.

Thanks - Mark

From: Dalbey, Steve
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2016 3:10 PM
To: Sullivan, Mark
Subject: FW: Hello

FYI

From: Hagler, Christy [<mailto:Christy.Hagler@mail.house.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 03, 2016 10:04 AM
To: Dalbey, Steve
Subject: RE: Hello

Hi Steve,

Thank you for the email and the invite to future meetings. Please let me know when the next one will be and I will plan to attend, this time for the whole meeting. 😊

You are correct, the group did provide for a good representation of interests across the hi-line which is beneficial for the group and our legislators. I have shared the information from that meeting with the DC office.

I was limited on time the last time I was there so I didn't have a chance to ask for a tour. Is it possible for me to tour the facility the next time I am there?

Have a great day!

Christy

Christy Hagler
Regional Director
Congressman Ryan Zinke, Montana

From: Dalbey, Steve [<mailto:sdalbey@mt.gov>]

Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2016 3:00 PM

To: Hagler, Christy

Subject: Hello

Hello Christy,

This is a follow-up email to the Region 6 Citizens Advisory Council meeting that was held in Fort Peck this Tuesday.

It was a pleasure to have you attend the meeting and we hope you are able to attend future meetings. As you saw this group represents a broad spectrum of interests across the Hi-Line.

Feel free to contact me if you have questions about the meeting or fisheries specific information that I might be able to provide.

Sincerely,

Steve Dalbey

Steve Dalbey
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Region 6 Fish Manager
Glasgow, MT 59230

Furthmyre, Coleen

From: Hanauska-Brown, Lauri
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 12:10 PM
To: Furthmyre, Coleen
Subject: RE: Public Records Request
Attachments: Materials sent to Rep Zinke in 2016.pdf

Attached are some materials I sent to Representative Zinke's office in February 2016. The 'sent' email was deleted long ago as was any reply correspondence from Zinke's office. These materials supported a request from FWP to sign on to the 'Dear Colleague' letter urging continued funding for the State Wildlife Grant program. I personally visited with Rep Zinke on March 2 in his DC office to thank him for his continued support of State Wildlife Grants and to urge his continued support of wildlife management and conservation work overall.

Lauri Hanauska-Brown
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Nongame Wildlife Management Bureau Chief

PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620
Phone: 406-444-5209
Email: lhanauska-brown@mt.gov

From: Furthmyre, Coleen
Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2017 11:45 AM
To: FWP *All Employees <FWPAllEmpl@mt.gov>
Subject: Public Records Request

Good morning and Happy New Year,

The Department received a public records request for the following information:

"Pursuant to the Montana Public Records Act § 2-6-101 et seq., I request access to and copies of all correspondence between Ryan Zinke, the Office of Representative Ryan Zinke (MT-AL) and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and all divisions within it. *This should include, but is not limited to* all digital, print or other correspondence, including attachments, between or involving Rep. Zinke, members of his staff and any employee within the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks or contractor working within Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks on FWP business. This should include correspondence in which Rep. Zinke or members of his staff are carbon copied ("CC'd"). Additionally, prior to serving in the US House, Ryan Zinke served as a Montana State Representative from 2008 – 2014; this request should include any correspondence from then-Montana State Representative Zinke as well."

For clarity: the time-period covered by this request is 2008 – present.

If you have/had any correspondence with Ryan Zinke please send the information via email or hard copy to me by next Friday, January 13.

Any questions feel free to contact me.

Thanks~

Coleen Furthmyre
Commission Secretary
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
1420 East 6th Avenue; PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620
(406) 444-7826
cfurthmyre@mt.gov

Support Funding For State and Tribal Wildlife Grants

February 18, 2016

Support Funding For State and Tribal Wildlife Grants

FY2017 Interior Programmatic Appropriations Request

DEADLINE: March 14, 2016

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in supporting the highest level of funding possible for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants (STWG) program in Fiscal Year 2017. This program is the nation's core program for preventing fish and wildlife from becoming endangered. The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program provides states, territories, the District of Columbia, and Indian tribes with the resources they need to implement proactive and effective wildlife conservation actions aimed at keeping wildlife from becoming endangered. The program has been successful in preventing the listing of petitioned species and helping to conserve over 12,000 species identified by the states as at-risk.

Providing capacity to states, which have primary responsibility for fish and wildlife management, is our best hope for preventing litigation and controversies resulting from federal endangered species listings. Thousands of on-the-ground projects that have restored degraded habitat, reestablished native wildlife, and improved our knowledge about wildlife populations and their habitats have been funded by the program. Many of these projects have been done through voluntary partnerships with private landowners.

The State and Tribal Grants Program supports strategic and effective conservation investments in every state and territory and on tribal lands. Funding for this popular program is supported by the national Teaming with Wildlife coalition which includes over 6,400 organizations representing millions of birdwatchers, hunters, anglers, hikers and other outdoor recreationists who support the goal of restoring and conserving our nation's at-risk fish and wildlife.

The program is used to implement State Wildlife Action Plans that were developed collaboratively by leading scientists, sportsmen, wildlife viewers, conservationists and private landowners and identified the most effective and practical means to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered. Congress can demonstrate its commitment to these plans, all of which have been revised with the newest science, by providing the federal share of support which in turn will leverage millions in state and private funds. These conservation dollars support jobs and help sustain the \$730 billion outdoor recreation industry.

Last year, 102 Members in the House signed the bipartisan letter supporting funding for the program. We urge you to sign letter to the Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee to provide the highest funding level possible for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program in FY 2017. To sign onto this letter, please contact Meridith Sebring (Thompson, 5-3311) or Michael DeFilippis (Young, 55765). We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

MIKE THOMPSON

DON YOUNG

FRANK LOBIONDO

RON KIND

March 2016

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum:

We are writing to express our support for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program. We appreciate your past support and we are hopeful that your support will continue. We believe that the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program is an important investment needed to sustain our nation's fish and wildlife, but we also understand the fiscal constraints that our nation is under. We ask that you allocate robust funding for this important, time-tested program for fiscal year 2017.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program is the nation's CORE program to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered. It is a mission-critical element of the Interior Department's budget, as no other program is focused on this goal. As you know, states bear the primary responsibility for wildlife management, and since the 1930's the federal government has worked in partnership with the states to fund successful conservation programs which ensure sustainability of the fish and wildlife species enjoyed by all Americans.

During the last decade, petitions for federal endangered species listing have increased by over 1,000%. The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program supports species monitoring that provides federal agencies with the best science to determine whether a species should be listed. The need to list species under the Endangered Species Act was eliminated when data funded through this program demonstrated that a listing was not warranted, saving taxpayer dollars and reducing regulatory uncertainty to business. Robust and consistent funding for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program is a key to fulfillment of the shared federal-state responsibility for keeping our nation's fish and wildlife from becoming endangered. Now more than ever, we should be focusing limited resources on this kind of smart, effective investment in conservation.

The State and Tribal Wildlife Grants program supports implementation and revision of State Wildlife Action Plans that were developed collaboratively by leading scientists, sportsmen, wildlife viewers, conservationists, and private landowners to conserve more than 12,000 species known to be at-risk. Congress can demonstrate its commitment to these plans in every state and territory by providing the federal share of support which will leverage millions in state and private matching funds. This investment helps support jobs and the \$730 billion outdoor

recreation industry. The program has the backing of over 6,400 organizations, representing millions of conservationists.

We urge the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies to provide strong and continued support for fiscal year 2017 at levels at or above fiscal year 2016 appropriations for the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program so that these important fish and wildlife conservation efforts continue. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

MIKE THOMPSON

DON YOUNG

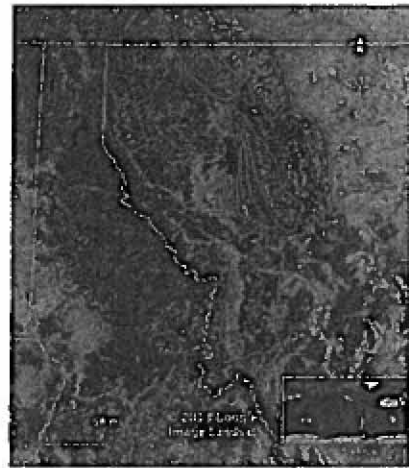
FRANK LOBIONDO

RON KIND

STATE WILDLIFE GRANT FUNDED CONSERVATION IN MONTANA

MONITORING SPECIES AT RISK

Hoary Marmot Surveys and Research



2014 and 2015 study areas (blue), hoary marmot range in Montana (red.)

Hoary marmots are considered at risk in Montana due to their assumed reliance on high elevation habitats and a limited capacity for distribution among these habitats. Twenty-three locations within 11 mountain ranges were identified as part of a Montana study of hoary marmot genetic diversity and habitat use. During the summers of 2014 and 2015, 39 marmots were captured across western Montana.

Initial results indicate marmots were more likely to occupy sites with increased cover of boulders and wet meadows and less likely to occupy sites with increased cover of shrubs and grasses. Genetic testing is underway to determine the relatedness of marmots across mountain ranges which should indicate their ability to move across rough landscapes if habitat conditions change. (In 63 days of field work crews hiked nearly 300 miles and gained 104,000 feet in elevation!) Information collected from this research will help managers prioritize conservation actions for high elevation species of all kinds to include mountain goats, pika, and ptarmigan.

RESTORING NATIVE HABITAT FOR ANIMALS AND PEOPLE

Foys Bend Restoration Project along the Flathead River

The purpose of the Foys Bend restoration project is to preserve, create, enhance, restore, and protect the functional values of riparian lands, wetlands and other lands, and to conserve natural values including fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, flood water retention, groundwater recharge, open space, and aesthetic values on the Flathead River. This project will ultimately help maintain the habitat integrity of this portion of the Flathead River system where the Stillwater and upper Flathead merge and transition into the meandering lower Flathead River system.

Long term benefits to habitat, wildlife, and people:

- Protect native fish habitat for bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout.
- Improve habitat for over 50 native terrestrial wildlife species including yellow warblers, wild turkey, and white-tailed deer.
- Provide potential future nesting trees for bald eagles, great blue heron, red-tailed hawks, osprey, great horned owls, and woodpeckers.
- Develop effective and economical techniques for stream bank stabilization and riparian restoration projects.
- Potential to expand project benefits throughout the valley through demonstrated success.
- Increase opportunities for wildlife viewing, hunting, and fishing through increasing habitat quality in an area currently open to the public.
- Further solidify partnerships with contributions from Trout Unlimited, Flathead Audubon, Flathead Lakers, Flathead Land Trust, NRCS, and MFWP.

Methods:

- Interior fence removal, some enclosure construction for vegetation restoration
- Planting and restoration of riparian shrubs and trees (cottonwood, aspen, chokecherry, hawthorn, willow, etc.)



Photo of enclosure immediately after completion from middle reference point looking west in the fall of 2009.



Photo of same enclosure from middle reference point looking west in the summer of 2013.

KEEPING MONTANA'S ECONOMY STRONG BY KEEPING RANCHERS ON THE LAND

Long-Billed Curlew Habitat Initiative

Since 2013, FWP has worked with Montana Audubon and members of the Montana Bird Conservation Partnership to implement the Long-Billed Curlew Habitat Initiative. Work of this initiative includes surveys for nesting curlews across western Montana and identification of high quality habitats for prioritizing conservation efforts. Surveys to date have focused on the Upper Missouri and Mission Valleys where the partnership is compiling strategies for habitat conservation. The use of land owner incentive programs is one of those potential strategies and land owner brochures showing best management practices for grassland conservation have been developed. Management for curlews targets grazed, native vegetation for breeding sites and

croplands of short to moderate height grasslands for brood rearing and foraging. The effectiveness of conservation actions will be monitored by the Montana Bird Conservation Partnership members and partners of the Long-Billed Curlew Habitat Initiative.



KEEPING MONTANA'S ECONOMY STRONG BY KEEPING INDUSTRY HEALTHY

Golden Eagle Nest Monitoring

Concern over declining golden eagle populations in North America has been growing over the past decade. Some nesting populations in the intermountain west have been documented to be in decline in association with reductions in native habitat and in some cases prey populations. To get better Montana-specific population information for this species, the Golden Eagle Working Group and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks prioritized golden eagle nest surveys beginning in 2012. In three short years of survey, many regions of the state have been extensively surveyed and golden eagle nests have been found in greater number than expected. In 2015 alone, 80 active nests were found in central and eastern Montana during a search of the highest quality habitat.

Having more knowledge on where our eagle nests are allows us to provide more informed management recommendations to developers such as wind energy companies. Knowing we have a large and well distributed population of nesting golden eagles lessens the risk of the species being listed under federal protections due to a lack of survey information.



Volesky, Mike

From: Daniel Vermillion <dan@sweetwatertravel.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 05, 2015 3:26 PM
To: Volesky, Mike
Subject: Re: Letter and Talking Points

Importance: High

Mike,

I had a meeting with Ryan Zinke yesterday, and he asked me to send him the economic impact of hunting and fishing numbers to him. Can you re-send?

Thanks.

Dan Vermillion
PO Box 668
Livingston, MT 59047
(406)333-0042 (Office)
(406)222-8863 (Fax)
(406)223-0066 (Cell)
www.sweetwatertravel.com
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www.sweetwaterranches.com
www.amazonbass.com
www.aguaboaamazonlodge.com
www.mongoliataimenfishing.com

On Feb 3, 2015, at 1:36 PM, Volesky, Mike <mvolesky@mt.gov> wrote:

Dan, Here you go, in draft form. Still needs polish, but you get the idea...

From: Palmer, Tom
Sent: Tuesday, February 03, 2015 10:05 AM
To: Volesky, Mike; Aasheim, Ron
Subject: Letter and Talking Points

As we discussed. Attached please find a draft "sign-on" letter and draft talking points, which each borrow freely from the Business for Montana's Outdoors [website](#). I've also inserted some of our recent economic value data.

Also attached is a "PDF", which is the BMO's endorsement "sign-on" statement for Chambers of Commerce and others to consider. My attached draft pulls info from it.

My one observation that might be related to BMO's reticence to speak on behalf of HB140 is that BMO seems to have, if not a single focus then, a primary one aimed at protection of and advocacy for public lands. Branching out to support hunting and license fees could be viewed by BMO leaders as laying outside their branded purview.

Have it.

Tom Palmer | Information Bureau Chief
Communication & Education Division

406-444-3051 | tpalmer@mt.gov

<image001.gif>

<Draft BMO-Sign-on-dft1.doc><Talking Points-HB140-BMO-dft1.doc><Chamber.ED-BMO-Endorsement-Statement.pdf>

Volesky, Mike

From: Aasheim, Ron
Sent: Tuesday, October 07, 2014 4:52 PM
To: Wessler, Mike
Cc: Hagener, Jeff; Volesky, Mike; Sihler, Paul; Palmer, Tom
Subject: Press calls

Mike,

KXLH request for hunting and fishing license purchase history for Zinke, Lewis, Daines and Curtis.

Matt Volz, AP, questions regarding legislation prohibiting the release of the names of hunters and trappers that take an animal. Follow up interviews with KCAP, and Beartooth NBC after Volz release hit the wire.

Brett French, Gazette, attended the Upland Game Bird Council meeting in Billings. Council discussed the status of the sage grouse plan and executive order. Expect an article this week.

Ron Aasheim
Administrator, Communication and Education Division
406-444-4038 | raasheim@mt.gov



Volesky, Mike

From: Wolcott, Matthew
Sent: Friday, December 02, 2016 10:28 AM
To: Beck, Ray; Tubbs, John; Sihler, Paul; Volesky, Mike
Cc: Hester, Stephanie; Davant, Kerry
Subject: Outreach to Daines, Zinke, Tester

I spoke this morning with staff from Senator Daines Office, Congressman Zinke's Office, and Senator Tester's Office. They are all feeling well informed and are comfortable with the amount of information they are receiving.

They all expressed appreciation for the State's response, and are very satisfied with the Incident Command Teams management of the issue to date. They appreciate the sense of urgency and understanding of the importance of this issue.

We made arrangements to get them additional information as needed.

They asked how they could help. I suggested that any support they can offer the administration, for the Incident Command Response and the difficult decisions that are being made, would likely be appreciated.

I will stay in contact with their staff over the coming weeks.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Matt

Furthmyre, Coleen



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

From: Rick Northrup
Sent: Tuesday, January 10, 2017 8:04 AM
To: Furthmyre, Coleen
Subject: public records request
Attachments: 11-10-16 Dome Mountain Ranch Support Letter.pdf

Coleen,

Per the public records request, please see the attached. I have scanned through my emails and this is the only item I came up with.

Thx,

Rick

Rick Northrup, Wildlife Habitat Bureau Chief
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1420 E. Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620
rnorthrup@mt.gov
406-444-5633

Wildlife Management Areas -- Celebrating 75 Years!

<https://youtu.be/6Ma4wLEImrc>

RYAN K. ZINKE
MONTANA AT-LARGE

113 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3211

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

November 10, 2016

David Allen
President and CEO
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
5705 Grant Creek Road
Missoula, Montana 59808

Dear President Allen:

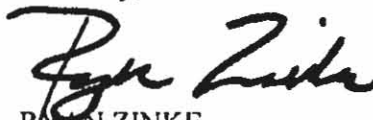
I write to offer my support of Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's efforts to acquire the 5,350 acre Dome Mountain Ranch in Park County, Montana. This land will in turn be conveyed to the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and join the existing Dome Mountain Wildlife Management Area. As Montana's only Congressman, I find great merit in supporting unique opportunities between the state of Montana and conservation groups to sustain critical wildlife habitat, foster economic opportunities, protect precious species populations, and expand recreational opportunities.

Given the placement of the ranch, right in the midst of the Greater Yellowstone and Yellowstone National Park ecosystem, the importance of wildlife range continuity is not to be understated. Species, such as elk, mule deer, and bighorn sheep, migrate right through these parcels of land or reside here during the winter months. There are also state and federal species of concern, such as wolverines, Canadian lynx, grizzly bears and golden eagles, which have been observed in this area.

Moreover, the economic benefits of protecting the land under the state of Montana's management are enormous. There is great potential for effective forestry management to take place in order to realize timber productivity. Recreational opportunities are also tied directly to the ranch. Given elk attractions in the overall region, both residents and non-residents account for recreation-based tourism, specifically hunting, which directly benefits the county. In the 2015 season alone, \$2.16 million was spent in Hunt District 313 pursuing elk, and those numbers could increase further with the access made available through the Dome Mountain Ranch acquisition and conveyance.

Collectively, these unique ecosystem and economic benefits define what truly makes Montana 'The Last Best Place,' which is why the Dome Mountain Ranch is worth protecting. I am fully supportive of projects that preserve our recreational heritage and increase access to our great outdoors. Please feel free to contact my office if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



RYAN ZINKE
Member of Congress

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710 CENTRAL AVENUE 59401
(406) 952-1210

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